

(The following was also sent as an attachment. I wanted to be assured that the following was received if something should happen with the attachment).

Please accept my comments with regards to the VRS (Video Relay Services).

My name is Sandra Slater and I reside in Roseville, California. As a deaf adult, I communicate via lipreading and am also proficient in sign language. However, my speech is of such quality that I am able to utilize the voice-carry over (VCO) feature of the VRS.

Upon viewing TV commercials for IP-Relay and perusing their website (www.ip-relay.com) I discovered VRS. I shall never forget placing my first phone call to my father in Reno, Nevada on August 15, 2003. It was a tremendously emotional experience as I have never been able to conduct a conversation on the phone. It was truly a dream come true!!

In comparison to VRS, typing conversations out in a text method either by using TDDs (teletype devices for the deaf) and/or via CRS (California Relay Service) is extremely impersonal, "cold" and archaic not to mention tedious and limiting. My hearing counterparts have available to them high-tech cell phones, mobile phones, and video conferencing. VRS is to me what cell phones and the like are to the hearing population.

As a consultant, my clients are extremely pleased and surprised. No more unnatural conversations (strike "GA"!) and no more delays. Most commented that "CRS was better than nothing, but VRS is definitely the way to go." VRS offers a far superior way to communicate via telephone. Reach out and touch someone indeed!

To borrow a quote from Helen Keller: "Deafness separates people from people, blindness separates people from things." VRS is truly an exciting "bridge" between the hearing and deaf cultures. In the brief two weeks that I have used VRS, my life, as well as others around me has been positively impacted. It is with a great sense of gratitude that I realize there is no longer an invisible wall preventing me from communicating with the hearing on the phone. My small corner of the world just got bigger!!

I implore you give judicious reconsideration of the interim per-minute compensation rate for Video Relay Service. Please allow VRS to expand and advance their technological skills so that they may continue to provide a vital service to a huge segment of the population, both hearing and deaf.

Thank you for the opportunity to express my experience with VRS.